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THE GOSSIP OF EUROPE

Needs Big Naval Loan--A Spinster Tax--English Labor Threatens to Arm--Duchess' Love for a Soldier.

LONDON, December 30.—England is face to face with the necessity for a \$50,000,000 naval loan. The scheme was launched more than a year ago by the Unionists, but was ridiculed by the government. Now it is said on the highest authority that Winston Churchill, who has just taken over the navy, will demand the huge naval loan when the navy estimates are laid before Parliament early next year. The idea of the young minister, of course, is to place the British navy at one stroke in a position of strength unattainable by Germany.

When Churchill took charge of the British navy as First Lord of the Admiralty, a position corresponding to that held by the Secretary of the Navy in the United States, people predicted that things would happen, for things have a way of happening in a department ruled by Churchill. Few expected, however, that anything so sensational would develop as a clean sweep of the Board of Admiralty, which is the executive committee that rules the King's navy under the First Lord's direction.

There are a number of reasons for this clean sweep. Most important of all is that it is a notification to Germany that England is ready to fight any time the Kaiser wants a scrap. On Monday, November 27, Sir Edward Grey made his speech on foreign affairs in the House of Commons and declared that England would stand by her friends, France and Russia. On Tuesday morning the German newspapers with one voice declared that Germany must build more warships. On Tuesday night Winston Churchill announced his changes at the Admiralty.

With the changed situation confronting him, Churchill wanted his plans and estimates prepared by the staff that will have to carry them out in the next few years.

A third and also an important reason is that the change gives an opportunity for many alterations in the active fleet commands and the placing in positions of responsibility of young and active men.

Admiral Bridgeman, the new First Sea Lord, who is sixty-three years old, is just the man for the job. He shines as an executive officer, and to him was given the task some years ago of organizing the home fleet—the greatest aggregation of fighting ships ever brought together. In the navy he is known as "Curly B." and to the man in the street as "the silent admiral." Unlike some other distinguished British sailors, he has never been known to grant a newspaper interview or to write a line for publication. He hasn't seen much active service.

CHURCHILL MAY BE PREMIER.

LONDON, December 30.—After Chancellor Lloyd-George, Winston Churchill remains the most interesting personality in the British government. At the age of thirty-seven, after a variety of successes that would satiate anyone not a glutton for combat, he is overhauling "the King's navy" with right good will. They say in the inner Liberal circles that he has abandoned his ambition to be Chancellor of the Exchequer and now aims at succeeding Premier Asquith. At present Lloyd-George would have the option of the Premiership if Asquith decided to quit, but time is on the side of Churchill and if his health holds out he is a likely winner.

The Chancellor, for all his tactfulness, has a good many critics in his own party, and they are ranging themselves behind Churchill, extolling his developed sense of responsibility and the mastery of detail he has displayed in every department he has handled, and they are many. If he now establishes increased confidence in the navy without materially boosting taxation he will have advanced his prospects considerably toward the realization of his ambition.

SPINSTERS TO PAY EXTRA TAX.

LEIPZIG, December 30.—Spinsters and bachelors all over the world will do well to watch the experiment shortly to be carried out in Greiz, in the romantic White-Elster valley. On January 1 the new anti-spinster law is to come into effect and thereafter every man or maid who has reached the age of thirty unwedded will be called upon to pay an extra 5 per cent income tax if he or she earns between \$750 and \$1500 a year, and 10 per cent if he or she earns more. Not until they are fifty do the unfortunate bachelors and spinsters escape from the punishment. Reports from Greiz—probably exaggerated—affirm that 100 beautiful and penniless maidens await the incoming trains and

fall on the necks of handsome visitors with the importunate war cry: "Marry me, marry me, marry me! I am assessed at twenty marks four and seventy pennings under our shameless anti-spinster law."

Greiz is the haughty metropolis of the historic principality "Reuss of the Older Line," whose oppressive parliament, consisting of twelve hunched husbands, has passed this law on the unwed. That men should be penalized for not finding wives is natural enough, and not without precedent; but the shame of the Reuss legislators is that they penalize women, too. Only five of the twelve had the spirit to oppose it.

As the day when the law is to come into force draws near some 112 women of Greiz are looking frantically for husbands. The forty-five local bachelors are taking things coolly. They have not yet decided whether it is cheaper to pay 10 per cent extra income tax or to pay for a single Paris hat. So visitors of the gentler sex to Greiz must not fear capture by force; but the danger is great for men who venture near husband-thirsty Greiz. And already, it is said, the hotel takings of Greiz have fallen off by half.

Now it is threatened that Reuss of the Younger Line, and Oldenburg, and important Baden may aggravate the ills of spinsterhood by imposing an unbearable tax. Learned men are looking up the question of bachelor taxes, and they unanimously proclaim them pregnant with peril.

These obstacles, with many similar ones, puzzle the tired brains of feminine Reuss of the Older Line. And it is furrowing such premature wrinkles on youthful brows that several beauties of twenty-five have been registered by reckless bureaucrats as over thirty; and, therefore, have been required imperatively to pay \$15 apiece not later than New Year's day.

GIVES UP ALL FOR WOMAN.

VIENNA, December 30.—Frauella Czuber, the daughter of a Vienna university professor, who recently became the morganatic wife of the Archduke Ferdinand Charles, is considered to be one of the most beautiful women in Europe. The Archduke is a nephew of the Emperor Francis Joseph and a cousin of the ex-Crown Princess of Saxony. He is forty-three years of age, and ten years have passed since he met and fell in love with Frauella Czuber, whom he married in Switzerland recently. He first attempted to gain the Emperor's consent to the marriage in 1903. A year later a marriage with a lady of royal blood was arranged for him, but he refused to hear of the prospect and retired from the court in disgrace. The Archduke will henceforth bear the name of Burg.

LABOR THREATENS TO ARM.

LONDON, December 30.—Unless Home Secretary McKenna can devise some scheme of conciliation or precaution very quickly, England's next spasm of strike fever may develop into bloodshed. Capital and labor are both talking of arming their own forces, justifying themselves by references to the new volunteer police force that is being raised under government auspices.

On the one hand there is a force in embryo which has been smiled upon by the Duke of Abercorn, but scowled at by the government. On the other, there is the Bradford railway men's declaration that they mean to organize a trade union physical protection league "to deal with the bullets of organized capital."

Moderate trade union leaders are scared at these portents, knowing that in some quarters, especially in the north of England, Socialist advocacy of violence is doing its baleful work.

DANES WARMLY GREET AMERICAN.

COPENHAGEN, December 30.—That the Danes have a warm spot in their hearts for the United States was proved during the recent lecturing trip which the American minister, Dr. Maurice Egan, made to several provincial towns.

At Odense, on the island of Funen, where he lectured on American literature, he was received by Mayor Bloch and the members of the municipality. The lecture was closed by the audience singing the Danish national anthem and the "Star Spangled Banner," and three cheers were given for the United States. The lecture was followed by a banquet in the minister's honor, at which 300 guests drank a toast to President Taft.

A repetition of this reception was given at Svendborg, where Dr. Egan was received by Mayor Schmidt.

ENGLISH VOTER

IS AMERICAN CITIZEN.

LONDON, December 30.—Michael Hyams, an American citizen, has voted for twelve years in England and it was not until he was elected a member of the Edmonton Board of Guardians that it was discovered that he owned property in America and was a naturalized citizen of the United States. Hyams was born in London, but he spent ten years in America. On his return to England twelve years ago he became a household, and as such has voted continuously since. When he learned that in the eye of the law he was still an American citizen he resigned from the board and applied for readmission papers to this country. Those have just been granted by the Home Office and Hyams will contest for the vacancy which his resignation made on the board.

DUCHESS FELL IN

LOVE WITH SOLDIER.

BERLIN, December 30.—Since the indiscretions of the Crown Prince the Kaiser has lost no opportunity of drawing attention to the model conduct of his favorite son, Prince Eitel-Fritz, whose wife is the best looking and richest of William's daughters-in-law. Prince Eitel-Fritz is the fat boy of the German royal family and as a child was the best looking and the idol of the German people. Since he grew up, however, he has lost his looks, being now rather short, enormously stout and of rather insignificant features.

Princess Eitel-Fritz was the Duchess Sophie Charlotte of Oldenburg, and is four years older than her husband. She is the daughter of the Grand Duke of Oldenburg by his first wife, from whom she inherited her fat purse. She first met her husband at the wedding of his brother, the Crown Prince. They saw each other frequently in the summer that followed and were married shortly after.

This is not supposed to have been the Princess' first excursion into the realms of love. When scarcely out of the "flapper" class she fell in love with her father's adjutant, a handsome and dashing young soldier. But the romance was short and sweet, for when it was discovered the officer was ordered to America "for his health." However, the Duchess didn't take it very seriously to heart, for not long after, the young man's "health" being entirely recovered, he returned to Germany and he and the Duchess and her family have been quite good friends ever since.

EARL GREY MAY BE LEADER.

LONDON, December 30.—Political circles are discussing who will succeed Lord Lansdowne as Conservative leader in the House of Lords. For it is now generally understood he is seeking to follow Arthur James Balfour, the ex-leader in the Commons, into retirement for reasons of health.

If the question of his successor had been pressed in the early summer very likely Lord Curzon would have won the leadership. But he is inclined to arrogance and has pushed his claims to advancement in rank too hard not to have jarred other aspirants for earldoms. So today he is only one in the running, with at least two powerful competitors—the Earl of Selborne, ex-High Commissioner in South Africa, and Earl Grey, ex-Governor General of Canada. Both have strong qualifications as imperialists, and both are genial and tactful.

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